

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
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R 020810Z MAR 78  
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0394

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA  
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: VIEWS OF FLEUR DE VILLIERS

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR, FEB. 28, DISCUSSED STATUS OF  
SAG CONSIDERATION OF WESTERN PROPOSAL WITH SUNDAY TIMES  
POLITICAL REPORTER FLEUR DE VILLIERS. DE VILLIERS HAS  
GOOD CONTACTS WITH DFA AND WITH BOTHA HIMSELF AND  
STORIES ARE FREQUENTLY LEAKED TO HER. SHE IS ALSO NOT  
BEYOND CREATING STORIES ON THE BASIS OF HER OWN SPECULATIONS.

2. DE VILLIERS BEGAN WITH A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF WHAT  
SHE DESCRIBED AS A MAJOR CONCERN OF KNOWLEDGEABLE SOUTH  
AFRICANS, I.E., THAT THE US WAS NOT PREPARED TO STAND  
BEHIND THE WESTERN PROPOSALS REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE SAG  
DID, IF SWAPO CONTINUED THE CONFLICT. PEOPLE WANTED TO KNOW,  
SHE SAID, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE SAG ACCEPTED THE  
PROPOSAL BUT SWAPO REFUSED. IT WAS A WIDELY HELD  
ASSUMPTION, SHE ASSERTED, THAT THE US AND THE WEST  
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WOULD SIMPLY BACK AWAY, AND THIS ASSUMPTION AFFECTED  
SOUTH AFRICAN CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS.

3. DE VILLIERS DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WAS ANY  
INCONSISTENCY IN HER SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLES ON FEB. 19  
AND 26 (CAPE TOWN 318 AND 372). SHE THOUGHT SHE HAD MADE  
THE POINTS IN BOTH PIECES THAT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF

BRIDGING THE REMAINING DIFFERENCES BUT THAT THE CHANCES WERE SMALL AND SOUTH AFRICA WAS PREPARING THE STAGE TO PROCEED UNILATERALLY.

4. SHE REITERATED THAT SHE FELT THE CHANCES THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL WERE "VERY SLIM INDEED." A MAJOR ISSUE, SHE SAID, WAS THE NATURE OF THE UN ROLE. IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR VORSTER, SHE SAID, THAT THE SAG NOT SEEM TO BE ACCEPTING THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE UN WAS SEEN TO BE IN CONTROL. VORSTER, SHE ASSERTED, HAD TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL REACTION. ALTHOUGH NO ONE IN THE NATIONAL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS WAS AT THE POINT OF VOICING ANY OBJECTIONS TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S DISCUSSIONS, VORSTER ALWAYS HAD TO JUDGE HOW FAR HE COULD GO ON MAJOR ISSUES OF THIS SORT THAT COULD CONCEIVABLY PROVOKE A SPLIT.

5. DE VILLIERS SAID SHE BELIEVED THAT VORSTER WANTED TO GET "SHUCK" OF NAMIBIA AND SEVERAL TIMES OVER THE PAST YEAR WANTED TO MOVE AHEAD WITH THE TURNHALLE SOLUTION. PIK BOTHA AND OTHERS, SHE SAID, HAD KEPT THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRACK, EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND OF EXPLORING TO THE END THE TERMS UNDER WHICH THIS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE.

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6. BUT THE MOST "CRITICAL PRIZE" FOR THE SAG, DE VILLIERS SAID, IS THE AVOIDANCE OF SANCTIONS. "IF THEY CAN ACHIEVE THIS, VORSTER AND BOTHA BELIEVE THAT INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF AN INTERNAL NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT WILL EVENTUALLY COME." THUS, SHE SUGGESTED, THE PRIORITY SAG CONSIDERATION AT THE MOMENT WAS TO CREATE THE BEST SITUATION POSSIBLE IN WHICH THE SAG COULD RATIONALIZE TO THE WESTERN COUNTRIES A UNILATERAL MOVE TOWARD NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE. IN THIS RESPECT, SHE THOUGHT THE PROCESS OF THE WESTERN INITIATIVE HAD GREATLY IMPROVED THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION. HAD THERE BEEN NO SUCH INITIATIVE AND SOUTH AFRICA HAD PROCEEDED WITH THE TURNHALLE SOLUTION THAT THEY HAD ORIGINALLY HAD IN MIND, IT WOULD HAVE HAD LITTLE CREDIBILITY AND SANCTIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN A REAL POSSIBILITY. AT THE SAME TIME, SHE AGREED, THE PROCESS HAS MOVED THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO DEVELOP AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK THAT PROMISES TO HAVE MORE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GENUINE ONE MAN, ONE VOTE ELECTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A BLACK-LED MAJORITY-RULE GOVERNMENT. BOWDLER

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PRESS CONFERENCES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014